United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 20, 2013

Mr. Peter May, Chairman
National Capital Memorial Advisory Commission
National Park Service
1100 Ohio Drive, SW
Washington, DC 20242

Dear Chairman May:

We write today to express our support for the placement of the National Liberty Memorial at the west side of the Jamie L. Whitten Building on 14th Street between Independence Avenue and Jefferson Drive, SW in Washington, D.C.

As you know, Congress authorized the establishment of the National Liberty Memorial on federal land in our nation's capital to honor the thousands of courageous slaves and free black persons who served during the American Revolution. We believe that this memorial will contribute to more completely telling the story of how our nation gained its independence. Among those who risked life and limb for the principles contained in the Declaration of Independence, including that "all men are created equal," were between 5,000 and 10,000 Americans of African descent who volunteered to serve as soldiers and sailors during the American Revolution. Their patriotic sacrifices at the very birth of our nation contributed immeasurably toward laying the foundations of this free country. The Civil Rights Movement was later able to build on that foundation by calling on America to, as Dr. King said, "live out the true meaning of its creed." This proud history is part of who we are as Americans, but is too little understood. That is why the National Liberty Memorial is so important.

The particular location of 14th and Jefferson would be particularly meaningful. With a perfect perspective on the Washington Monument, the connection to the father of our country and our struggle for independence is obvious. It is important for Americans of all backgrounds to understand that this is their history. Placing the National Liberty Memorial on this site will contribute to telling that story.

This memorial has been under consideration for many years and we look forward to seeing it completed. We are confident that this site is an ideal location for the National Liberty Memorial and that it would enhance the educational and inspirational attributes of the National Mall. We hope that the Commission agrees and we thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

CHARLES E. GRASSLEY

United States Senate

CHRISTOPHER S. MURPHY

United States Senate